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ABSTRACT

This bulletin explores promotion of school safety by increasing students' accountability for their behavior. It provides information to facilitate the development of constructive, well-conceived, accountability-based programs that work with juvenile offenders. These programs also address the issues of violence, disorder, and fear. The bulletin documents the need for increased efforts to improve school safety, places accountability-based programs within the context of a comprehensive approach to school safety, identifies common features of successful school-safety programs, and identifies and summarizes key elements of effective accountability-based school-safety programs. Major steps essential to program implementation are summarized, and the potential benefits of successful programs are described. Also described are several current approaches to implementing school-safety programs that exemplify Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grants Program principles, programs targeted toward high-risk students and juveniles referred by law enforcement, and programs designed to protect students and school personnel from violence. The bulletin ends with 13 references and resource lists including 5 programs, 30 organizations, 14 assessment tools, and 96 references. (RT)

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ED 457 564

JAIBG BULLETIN
Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grants Program
December 2000

From the Administrator

While research indicates that students are safer in school than elsewhere, a small number of fatal shootings on school campuses have raised public concern and emphasized the importance of having an accurate assessment of school violence so that we can target resources effectively.

The author of this Bulletin, part of OJJDP's JAIBG Best Practices Series, recommends a comprehensive, collaborative approach that involves students, parents, and school officials. The Bulletin describes key elements of effective school-based accountability programs, delineates the steps essential to successful program implementation, and provides examples of promising programs and best practices.

Every child is entitled to learn and grow in a safe environment. The information that this Bulletin offers should enhance our efforts to make that ideal a reality.

John J. Wilson
Acting Administrator

EA 031313

Increasing School Safety Through Juvenile Accountability Programs

Scott H. Decker

This Bulletin is part of OJJDP's Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grants (JAIBG) Best Practices Series. The basic premise underlying the JAIBG program, initially funded in fiscal year 1998, is that young people who violate the law need to be held accountable for their offenses if society is to improve the quality of life in the Nation's communities. Holding a juvenile offender "accountable" in the juvenile justice system means that once the juvenile is determined to have committed law-violating behavior, by admission or adjudication, he or she is held responsible for the act through consequences or sanctions, imposed pursuant to law, that are proportionate to the offense. Consequences or sanctions that are applied swiftly, surely, and consistently, and are graduated to provide appropriate and effective responses to varying levels of offense seriousness and offender chronicity, work best in preventing, controlling, and reducing further law violations.

In an effort to help States and units of local government develop programs in the 12 purpose areas established for JAIBG funding, Bulletins in this series are designed to present the most up-to-date knowledge to juvenile justice policymakers, researchers, and practitioners about programs and approaches that hold juvenile offenders accountable for their behavior. An indepth description of the JAIBG program and a list of the 12 program purpose areas appear in the overview Bulletin for this series.

Overview

The topic of this Bulletin, Purpose Area 11 of the JAIBG program, is promoting school safety by increasing students' accountability for their behavior. This Bulletin provides information to facilitate the development of constructive, well-conceived "accountability-based programs that work with juvenile offenders who are referred by law enforcement agencies, or which are designed, in cooperation with law enforcement officials, to protect students and school personnel from drug, gang, and youth violence." It must be noted, however, that accountability-based programs operate most effectively when they are part of a comprehensive, collaborative approach involving a wide range of partners, including students, parents, school faculty and staff, community residents, members of community organizations, law enforcement and juvenile justice authorities, elected officials, and business representatives. Federal agencies must work in

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partnership with local juvenile justice systems and schools to establish and maintain accountability-based programs, and student accountability must work in concert with institutional accountability that addresses the underlying causes of student violence and misconduct.

School safety programs that emphasize student accountability can build on the experiences of successful community-based delinquency prevention and intervention programs. OJJDP's Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders (Wilson and Howell, 1993) and SafeFutures program are two examples that have proven effective in addressing juvenile delinquency. The Comprehensive Strategy provides a blueprint for establishing a continuum of care to meet the needs of at-risk or delinquent youth while protecting the public from harm. It promotes a systematic approach to prevention and the use of graduated sanctions in dealing with the offenses committed by such individuals and advocates the development of partnerships between the juvenile court, law enforcement, and community. SafeFutures extends the Comprehensive Strategy by integrating service delivery and ensuring that juveniles' needs are met by an umbrella of service providers that will keep them from "falling through the cracks" of the juvenile justice and social service systems. The following programmatic strategies derived from the Comprehensive Strategy and the SafeFutures program are applicable to accountability-based school safety initiatives:

- Emphasize juvenile accountability.
- Develop an expanded and integrated network of social services.
- Provide a seamless continuum of services to meet the needs of youth in trouble.
- Respond to delinquency with meaningful consequences through the sanctioning power of the juvenile justice system.
- Involve law enforcement as a stakeholder in community-based efforts to prevent and respond to delinquency.
- Answer each law violation with an offender/offense-appropriate and measured response.
- Involve grassroots neighborhood organizations.
- Respond to problems with strategies that reflect local concerns and needs and are likely to garner community support.

Accountability in a school environment means expecting students to comply with school rules and regulations that reflect community standards of behavior and, when necessary, addressing student misconduct with appropriate consequences, including school discipline. Programs can take a comprehensive approach to reducing delinquency and misconduct in schools by building student accountability into the school culture. Efforts to enhance school safety should be fully integrated into all aspects of school operation, including the learning environment, curriculum, administration, staff selection, and staff training.

This Bulletin examines methods for increasing school safety through accountability-based programs that address the issues of violence, disorder, and fear. It documents the need for increased efforts to improve school safety, places accountability-based programs within the context of a comprehensive approach to school safety, identifies common features of successful school safety programs, and identifies and summarizes key elements of effective accountability-based school safety programs. Essential steps in program implementation are summarized, and the potential benefits of successful programs are described. Finally, this Bulletin highlights several current approaches to implementing school safety programs that exemplify JAIBG principles.

Major Indicators of Need

In light of the small number of highly publicized acts of school violence in the news—such as the deadly shootings in April 1999 at Columbine High School in Littleton, CO—it is especially important to gain an accurate picture of the current level of school violence. Data from the U.S. Departments of Justice and Education[1] document that students are safer in school than in other locations and that school victimization declined during the 1990's. In 1997, about 24 of every 1,000 students (ages 12–18) were victims of serious violent crimes away from school, while only 8 of every 1,000 students were victims of such crimes at school.[2] Less than 1 percent of the more than 2,500 murders and suicides of juveniles that year occurred at school. In all, 58 school-associated deaths (including students and nonstudents) that resulted from 46 incidents were reported for the 1997–98 school year. In school year 1996–97, 43 percent of all schools surveyed reported no crimes to the police, and 47 percent reported one or more minor or nonviolent crimes but no serious or violent crimes.

These results suggest that students are relatively safe at school and safer now than at any time in the 1990's; however, students in substantial numbers are victims of nonserious violent crime (simple assault) and theft. In 1997, for example, of students ages 12–18, 40 out of 1,000 males and 24 out of 1,000 females were victims of simple assault, and 64 out of 1,000 males and 61 out of

[1] Data presented in this section are taken from *Indicators of School Crime and Safety, 1999* (Kaufman et al., 1999) and the *1999 Annual Report on School Safety* (U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education, 1999).

[2] "At school" includes incidents on school property, at a school-sponsored event, or in transit to or from school or a school-sponsored event.

1,000 females were victims of theft while at school.

Teachers are also the victims of a significant number of nonserious violent crimes and thefts at school. During the 5-year period from 1993 through 1997, teachers experienced 579,100 simple assaults and 1,114,000 thefts, averaging 115,820 simple assaults and 222,800 thefts per year. This means that approximately 27 out of 1,000 teachers were victims of simple assault and 53 out of 1,000 teachers were victims of theft each year. Teachers at middle and junior high schools had the highest rates of victimization for these crimes, followed by senior high school and elementary school teachers.

Also of concern are the presence of guns or other weapons in schools and students' increased fear of victimization. In 1997, 18 percent of high school students reported carrying a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club in the past 30 days, and 9 percent reported carrying a weapon on school property in the past 30 days. This is a decrease from the 12 percent of students who reported carrying a weapon to school in 1993. Yet, despite this decrease and a concurrent decrease in overall school victimizations during the 1990's, students' perception of danger increased. In 1989, 6 percent of students ages 12–19 sometimes or most of the time feared they were going to be attacked or harmed at school; by 1995, this percentage had risen to 9.

This review suggests that, although school is a relatively safe place for students, faculty, and staff—indeed, as previously noted, for many youth, school grounds are safer than their neighborhoods—a number of students and school personnel are victimized at school. Although a small number of killings take place on school property each year, the number of assaults, with and without weapons, is significant. Current research does not pinpoint specific causes of student misconduct and victimization. This inability to identify causes highlights the complexity of this problem and magnifies the difficulty of finding a solution. Although school safety initiatives should be tailored to the circumstances of individual schools and communities, current knowledge indicates the need for a multifaceted program that focuses on several areas that have a significant impact on school safety.

A Comprehensive Approach to School Safety

A number of programs discussed later in this Bulletin, such as school-based probation officers, school resource officers, and alternative school programs, are effective single-program approaches to a complex problem that is often more effectively addressed through a more comprehensive approach to school safety and school improvement.[3] Although statistics show that schools are by far the safest places for youth, threats, bullying, intimidation, and acts of violence are commonplace in some schools. Left unaddressed, these problems provide fertile ground for future, and possibly more serious, acts of violence.

However, youth violence is not solely a school issue. Schools need the meaningful involvement of students, parents, and other school/community partners to avoid operating in isolation. Information about conditions in the school and community needs to be exchanged openly. Solutions to school and community youth violence must be identified collaboratively. Stakeholders can then identify comprehensively the risk and protective factors that must be targeted to institute systemic changes in the school and community setting. In this approach, a school/community profile is developed to analyze and prioritize the various problems at school and in the community that need to be addressed. School/community-based teams can then design goals and objectives to address these priorities, allowing schools to select and implement programs that have been evaluated for their ability to reduce violence or promote other mediating factors. Elements of a collaborative approach to school safety are listed on pages 4 and 5.

As plans are crafted, it is critical to institute supportive school policies and procedures. Seamless services also should be provided to protect and support youth and families who may need assistance. These services should interface with social and mental health services, alternative educational settings, law enforcement, and the juvenile justice system. Schools should establish high academic and social expectations for youth in addition to setting norms of behavior. Effective policies should provide guidance and support and ensure that youth not only are held accountable but also are treated equitably and fairly.

Finally, the importance of evaluation in this process cannot be overstated. Schools need to institute an ongoing evaluation process to ensure that the assessment, planning, program selection, and implementation phases of a comprehensive approach are closely monitored and adjusted. The school/community-based teams should

[3] The National Resource Center for School Safety (NRCSS) provides training and technical assistance to States, school systems, and communities to create and implement such comprehensive school safety plans. NRCSS is operated by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory in Portland, OR, through a cooperative agreement with two Federal agencies: the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program. NRCSS's mission is to provide training, technical assistance, resources, and information on school safety and violence prevention to school districts, law enforcement agencies, community organizations, and State and local agencies working to reduce youth violence and create safe schools. The Center operates a lending library with resources and information relating to school safety planning and essential components for safe schools. The Center's Web page (www.safetyzone.org) contains a database on effective school/community-based programs for violence prevention.

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A Collaborative Approach to School Safety

Virtually every observer who writes on the issue of school safety notes the need for comprehensive interventions that involve representatives from education, law enforcement, and the community.[1] The 1998 and 1999 *Annual Report on School Safety* highlight the following tasks for participants in collaborative school safety programs:[2]

Students

- Behave responsibly.
- Report crimes and threats to school officials.
- Get involved in or start anticrime programs at school.
- Learn how to avoid becoming a victim.
- Seek help.

Parents

- Actively communicate with children.
- Be clear and consistent in disciplining children.
- Model prosocial behavior.
- Get involved with school and community organizations and activities.
- Keep guns and other weapons out of the reach of unsupervised children.
- Limit children's exposure to and experience with crime and violence.
- Participate in family management training or counseling opportunities.

Schools

- Provide strong administrative support for assessing and enhancing school safety.
- Redesign the school facility to eliminate dark, secluded, and unsupervised spaces.
- Devise a system for reporting and analyzing violent and noncriminal incidents.
- Design an effective discipline policy.
- Build a partnership with local law enforcement.
- Enlist school security professionals in designing and maintaining the school security system.
- Train school staff in all aspects of violence prevention.
- Provide all students access to school psychologists or counselors.
- Provide crisis response services.
- Implement schoolwide education and training on avoiding and preventing violence.

continued

[1] See National Center on Violence Research, 1998; National School Safety Center, 1995; Gottfredson, 1997; Boyle and Kearns, 1998. For an indepth discussion of the practical and legal issues involved in the interagency information sharing necessary to implement comprehensive interventions involving representatives from a variety of agencies, consult the JAIBG Bulletin *Establishing and Maintaining Interagency Information Sharing* (Slayton, 2000).

[2] See chapter 4 of the *1999 Annual Report on School Safety* (U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education, 1999) for a list of relevant resources.

assess whether the goals, objectives, and implementation requirements of the selected strategies can be measured for evaluation purposes. They should also measure the overall impact of their plans in reducing violence and disruptions at school.

Common Features of Successful School Safety Programs

In her review of 149 school-based programs, Denise Gottfredson (1997) found that programs successful in reducing crime and delinquency shared a number of common features, including:

- Building school capacity to support innovation.
- Communicating clear messages about acceptable and unacceptable behavior and enforcing rules consistently.
- Emphasizing responsible decisionmaking and problem solving in whatever approach is adopted.
- Teaching high-risk youth critical thinking skills that enable them to consider alternatives to delinquent behavior.

Although it is important to provide students with access to school psychologists and counselors, according to Gottfredson, programs that focused exclusively on counseling, especially group counseling, had little impact on students' criminal and delinquent behavior. Programs that built skills were much more likely to have positive results, such as reducing school disorder.

- ☐ Use alternative school settings for educating violent and weapon-carrying students.
- ☐ Create a climate of tolerance and acceptance of student diversity.
- ☐ Provide appropriate educational services for all students.
- ☐ Reach out to communities and businesses to improve the safety of students.
- ☐ Actively involve students in making decisions about school policies and programs.
- ☐ Prepare an annual report on school crime and safety.

Communities

- ☐ Establish school-community partnerships.
- ☐ Identify and measure the problem.
- ☐ Set measurable goals and objectives.
- ☐ Identify appropriate research-based programs and strategies.
- ☐ Implement a comprehensive plan.
- ☐ Evaluate the plan.
- ☐ Revise the plan on the basis of the evaluation.

Police and Juvenile Justice Authorities

- ☐ Establish a working relationship with schools.
- ☐ Patrol the school grounds, facilities, and travel routes.
- ☐ Respond to reports of criminal activities in the school.
- ☐ Consult with school authorities and parents regarding school security.
- ☐ Work directly with youth to maintain a constructive relationship.

Businesses

- ☐ Adopt a local school.
- ☐ Provide training in basic job skills.
- ☐ Provide internships and employment opportunities.
- ☐ Provide scholarships to deserving students.
- ☐ Offer resources to local schools.
- ☐ Provide flexible work hours and leave to parents and volunteers.

Elected Officials and Government Agencies

- ☐ Provide leadership for school crime prevention.
- ☐ Support school crime prevention research.
- ☐ Encourage all schools to monitor and report crime.
- ☐ Begin a discussion of key legislative issues in school violence prevention.
- ☐ Build collaborations between and among Federal, State, and local agencies to pool resources and maximize the use of effective approaches to school safety.

Sources: U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education. 1998, 1999. *1998 Annual Report on School Safety* and *1999 Annual Report on School Safety*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education.

Key Elements of Effective Accountability-Based Programs

Accountability-based programs that are developed and implemented within a comprehensive approach to school safety should incorporate several key elements. The following principles are the foundation of successful accountability-based school safety programs:

- ☐ **Emphasis on student involvement.** No program, no matter how well crafted or implemented, can successfully promote school safety without the involvement of students. In many districts, students and parents sign "contracts" with the school that will govern the students' academic and social conduct in school. These "contracts" are developed by the students and parents in consultation with teachers and other school personnel, often including school resource officers. Where appropriate, such as in the case of juveniles on probation, the local juvenile justice system may be involved. Students should be encouraged to behave responsibly and to report the dangerous or threatening behavior of their peers. They should be held accountable for knowing and following school rules, resolving problems nonviolently, and respecting the feelings of other students and the authority of school staff and faculty.
- ☐ **Meaningful offender- and offense-specific responses to every act of misconduct.** Often, initial acts of misconduct are ignored, paving the way for subsequent misbehavior. If the goal of increasing school security is to be reached, each act

of misconduct should be met with a measured, appropriate consequence. To do this, schools must implement policies and procedures for monitoring infractions of rules and other student misconduct. At the same time, schools must be careful not to infringe on students' rights to due process.

- **Graduated sanctions appropriate to the seriousness of the misconduct and the history of the offender.** As students commit additional, more serious acts, the school's response to those behaviors should also increase in severity. As outlined in OJJDP's Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders, a model graduated sanctions system combines treatment and rehabilitation with reasonable, fair, humane, and appropriate sanctions.

Major Steps Essential to Program Implementation

The following steps are essential to implementing an accountability-based school safety program:

Offer incentives for program participation. As noted, comprehensive programs involve representatives from both the public and private sectors. Involvement in these programs, however, may require participants to develop new collaborative relationships. For example, teachers may need to see themselves as partners with law enforcement personnel in establishing and maintaining school security. Programs should use incentives to ensure the widest possible participation. Incentives can include a variety of tangible items, such as T-shirts and mugs. More important, however, are intangible incentives, such as positive reinforcement and emphasis on each participant's stake in the program's success.

Articulate the program's goals, policies, and methodologies. Program leaders need to ensure that students, parents, teachers, and the community understand the program's goals, policies, and methodologies. Involving the juvenile justice system in accountability-based programs is vital. Yet, at the same time, it is also important to assure the community that an emphasis on student accountability will not result in excessively punitive responses that lack any restorative component.

Establish clearly defined roles and create realistic expectations. Each participant and participating entity should be given specific roles and responsibilities. Program participants and members of the community should have a clear understanding of the potential impact of the program. They should also appreciate the level of commitment needed for the program to succeed.

Provide training to program participants. Training should be provided at the program's inception and periodically throughout its life and should include the widest possible group of participants. Training for teachers and other school staff should include rules for dealing with violent behavior and instructions on how to use the school's alarm system, when to refer students for counseling or discipline, and what to do in a crisis.

Anticipate and respond to active or passive resistance. Police have often been reluctant to become involved in school safety initiatives, either because such work was not viewed as "real" law enforcement or because of institutional barriers. Other community groups have also been reluctant on occasion to become more involved in matters of school safety, perhaps out of fear, lack of familiarity with the issues, or a desire to remain insulated from the problems in their community. Program organizers should target these groups with aggressive outreach efforts that highlight the potential benefits of accountability-based school safety programs for schools and the community.

Potential Impact of Accountability Programs

The implementation of effective accountability-based school safety and discipline programs that hold students to established and clearly articulated standards of behavior should result in the following benefits:

- Reduced juvenile crime and misconduct.
- Reduced levels of fear in students, parents, and school personnel.
- Reduced workload for juvenile justice and law enforcement officers.
- Improved learning environments in schools.
- Increased student focus on academic endeavors.
- Increased job satisfaction for teachers and other school employees.
- Increased participation of parents, children, and the community in school activities.
- Increased credibility of the schools in the eyes of the community.

These benefits will occur only if schools are able to deal with disciplinary problems internally, where appropriate, through measured and sensible responses. Schools must resist the temptation to rely on suspensions and expulsions because, as a recent National Center on Violence Research (1998) report notes, simply "ejecting" problem students from school escalates problems in the community and fails to resolve the underlying causes. Reliance on suspensions and expulsions could have the unintended effect of diverting "marginal" youth into street crime and involvement in the juvenile justice system. Overly punitive responses also may increase students' fear of victimization by giving them an exaggerated sense of the extent of school crime and violence.

Promising Programs and Best Practices

Programs eligible for funding under JAIBG Purpose Area 11 fall into two general categories: (1) programs that target juvenile offenders already involved with the juvenile justice and/or law enforcement systems and (2) programs that involve the collaborative efforts of schools, communities, and law enforcement to reduce school violence. In practice, programs may involve efforts both to intervene directly with delinquent and high-risk youth and to build preventive student accountability measures into a school's curriculum, policies, and procedures. All JAIBG initiatives place increased student accountability at the center of their programmatic efforts.

Currently, there are few programs that fulfill all the goals outlined in Purpose Area 11 and fewer still that have been evaluated sufficiently to determine their effectiveness.[4] This section describes several programs that best exemplify JAIBG principles.

Programs Targeted Toward High-Risk Students and Juveniles Referred by Law Enforcement

School-based probation, juvenile diversion, and alternative education programs are three types of programs that have successfully implemented accountability principles to intervene with delinquent and high-risk juveniles. Pennsylvania's school-based probation program, the Handgun Intervention Program (HIP), and the Positive Adolescent Choices Training (PACT) program are good examples of this accountability-based intervention approach. Each of these programs is directed toward high-risk and/or delinquent youth and is designed to hold these juveniles accountable for their delinquent behavior.

School-based probation. School-based probation programs contribute to the overall school environment by bringing additional attention to students already experiencing difficulty with the law. These interventions are based on a supervision model in which the offices of probation officers are located in the schools. School-based probation programs are under way in a number of locations, including the cities of Phoenix, AZ; and Bakersfield and Sacramento, CA; and the States of Maryland and Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania initiative has been evaluated and found to have many positive features (Griffin, 1999).

Pennsylvania's school-based probation program is one of the most extensive in the Nation. Begun in 1990 and supported by the Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission and the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, this accountability-based program has been implemented in approximately 300 schools, where about 150 probation officers have served more than 16,000 juveniles (Griffin, 1999). Officers in these Pennsylvania schools have smaller caseloads and more contact with clients than probation officers located in more traditional settings (Metzger, 1997). School-based probation officers have the opportunity to see how their clients interact with their peers, and the students know that their school conduct will be closely monitored. Students are held accountable for their actions on a daily basis, and certain conditions of probation, such as attending school regularly and following school rules, are enforced directly.

The Handgun Intervention Program. HIP in Detroit, MI, was developed by Judge Willie Lipscomb, Jr., as a court-based educational diversion program for defendants charged with carrying a concealed weapon. The defendants are required to attend at least one 4-hour session as a condition of their bond. HIP targets African American males (ages 12–28, including middle and high school students) who are first- or second-time offenders and who currently have no other serious charges pending. The goal of the program is to prevent these defendants from committing gun violence or from becoming homicide victims. The program stresses the importance of consequences, choices, responsibility, and nonviolence.

HIP is coordinated by the probation office and staffed by volunteers from the court and community. Volunteers include clergy, police officers, probation officers, ex-offenders, doctors, lawyers, and victims. Judge Lipscomb and the volunteers implement the 4-hour gun education class, which is held on Saturday mornings. The program has five components:

- Program leaders present images of gun-murder victims to remind the offenders that they have much in common with victims and to appeal to their sense of humanity.
- Program leaders distribute information about guns and gun-related violence and lead a discussion of these topics.
- Volunteer youth present information about avoiding and neutralizing violent street conflicts.
- Participants discuss their responsibilities and heritage as African American men (this segment includes a presentation about historic figures and civil rights leaders).
- Program leaders encourage participants to take an optional vow of nonviolence.

The program has recently been expanded and is now being offered to middle and high school students in the Detroit metropolitan area to reach high-risk youth before they become

[4] Indeed, the need for comprehensive evaluations of such programs is one of the most important recommendations to emerge from this review. Too many programs are accepted as "successes" in the absence of rigorous external evaluations. Clearly, communities cannot move forward until they know what works, for whom, and under what circumstances.

defendants. More than 5,000 young men have participated in the program since its inception in 1993, and the program continues to grow.

HIP has been noted as a promising program (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1999). A preliminary evaluation conducted by The Urban Institute for the National Institute of Justice found statistically significant movements in HIP participants' attitudes toward handguns and handgun violence over the short term, although these attitude changes did not necessarily produce significant behavioral changes (Roth, 1998a, 1998b). The final evaluation is expected to be available early in 2001.

Positive Adolescent Choices Training. The PACT program is designed to reduce the chances that at-risk adolescents will become victims or perpetrators of violence. It addresses the problem of expressive violence, which involves loss of control among family, friends, and acquaintances and represents the greatest threat to adolescents. Although developed especially for sensitivity to the needs of African American youth, the techniques used in the program are applicable to, and frequently used with, multiethnic groups.

PACT primarily targets high-risk youth between the ages of 12 and 16 who are selected by teachers on the basis of skill deficiencies in relating to peers, behavior problems (particularly aggression), and/or a history of violence, victimization, or exposure to violence. PACT helps adolescents learn how to adopt more appropriate and socially effective ways of interacting with others, how to recognize and control angry emotions that can interfere with verbal resolutions to conflict, and how to understand and avoid the risk of violence. Training takes place in small groups of no more than 10, targeting skills that include giving constructive criticism (expressing criticism or displeasure calmly), receiving negative feedback (reacting appropriately to the criticism and anger of others), and negotiating (identifying problems and potential solutions and learning to compromise). The curriculum features one or two lessons each week for 19 weeks. Students who received instruction reduced antisocial and violent behaviors by 38 percent (U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education, 1999).

Programs Designed To Protect Students and School Personnel From Violence

Approaches that successfully focus on preventing school violence and misconduct include school resource officers (SRO's) and peer mediation. Such approaches are being used effectively to implement JAIBG principles.

School resource officers. SRO's (law enforcement officers who are well prepared to deal with weapons and violent behavior) are employed in a large number of schools throughout the country to maintain order and discipline. They are trained to counsel students on law-related problems and support services, teach classes on the law, and serve as role models for students. SRO's have been most successful in settings where their role is clearly defined and well understood by students, teachers, and staff and where they have received extensive training. In their most expansive role, they serve as referral agents to other groups such as law enforcement, social services, and tutoring services. SRO's have been employed in innovative ways in Arlington, TX; Montgomery, AL; and Phoenix, AZ.

Peer mediation programs. Peer mediation programs succeed because students are able to connect with their peers in ways that adults cannot. The self-empowering aspects of the mediation process appeal to youth and foster self-esteem and self-discipline. When students generate their own solutions to problems, they feel as though they are in control of their lives and are committed to the plans of action they have created to address their problems.

In one example of a successful peer mediation program, students in grades 6–12 were selected, based on nominations by faculty, staff, and students, to serve as neutral mediators to assist other students in resolving conflict situations. Selected students received peer mediation training (approximately 12–15 hours over 2 days), which included activities related to understanding the origins of conflict, responding to conflict, developing effective communication skills, and understanding the mediator's roles and the mediation process (U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education, 1999). In addition, subsequent biweekly meetings incorporating more advanced activities addressed bias awareness, social and cultural diversity, advanced communication, anger management, caucusing, negotiating, and group problem solving. Program materials included a program guide, a student manual, and an optional training video. The program also included training workshops and activities for staff, students, parents, and communities. An evaluation of the program included students of mixed ethnicity in an urban setting who exhibited a 19-percent reduction in antisocial and violent behaviors. More information on peer mediation can be obtained from the National Center for Conflict Resolution Education (contact information is listed under Programs in the "For Further Information" section).

Conclusion

The first requirement of any successful school safety program is careful planning. Without such planning, interventions, no matter how well intentioned, will not succeed. Planning efforts should be comprehensive, involving a wide range of individuals and school

personnel. The SARA (scan, analyze, respond, assess) problem-solving model is one method that can be used effectively during the planning process. Planners can scan the broad range of problems faced by the school, analyze the available resources, respond by developing policies and implementing procedures that emphasize accountability, and subsequently assess the impact of the program.

Second, programs with an integrative and collaborative basis for their creation, implementation, execution, and evaluation are most likely to succeed. As with planning, a comprehensive approach that includes students, teachers, staff, parents, and juvenile justice system officials is recommended for school-based intervention efforts designed to reduce violence and disorder. Appropriate staffing is necessary at each level of the intervention to ensure the program's effectiveness; individuals with appropriate skills and experience should be hired whenever possible. Training is also key to the success of any intervention. Every individual involved should receive appropriate training that includes cross-training where possible (e.g., training in security for teachers and training for school resource officers to support the teaching function).

Finally, more and better evaluations of school-based interventions are essential to establishing and maintaining effective accountability-based school safety programs. Careful measurement, data collection, and evaluation of all school accountability interventions will enhance existing programs and provide a solid foundation for future efforts. More information is needed about what works, when it works, and for whom it works. Without strong, independent evaluations, the identification of successful programs for replication is impossible.

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For Further Information

Listed below are resources for further information about the five accountability-based school safety programs described in this Bulletin, other organizations dealing with issues related to school safety and student accountability, and assessment tools that could be useful to developers of school safety programs.

Programs

For more information about school-based probation, contact:

Patricia Torbet or Douglas Thomas
National Center for Juvenile Justice
710 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
412–227–6950
E-mail: ncjj@ncjj.org
Internet: www.ncjj.org

For more information about the Handgun Intervention Program (HIP), contact:

Terrence Evelyn, Program Coordinator
Handgun Intervention Program
36th District Court, Madison Center
421 Madison Avenue, Suite 3017
Detroit, MI 48226
313-965-3724
313-965-3951 (fax)
Internet: www.36districtcourt.org

For more information about Positive Adolescent Choices Training (PACT), contact:

Betty R. Yung, Ph.D.
School of Professional Psychology
Wright State University
Ellis Human Development Institute
9 North Edwin C. Moses Boulevard
Dayton, OH 45407
937-775-4300
937-775-4323 (fax)
E-mail: betty.yung@wright.edu

For more information about school resource officers (SRO's), contact:

Pam Riley, Ed.D., Director
Center for the Prevention of School Violence
313 Chapanoke Street, Suite 140
Raleigh, NC 27603
800-299-6054
919-773-2846
919-773-2904 (fax)

For more information about peer mediation programs, contact:

Donna Crawford, Executive Director
National Center for Conflict Resolution Education
Illinois Bar Center
424 Second Street
Springfield, IL 62701-1779
217-523-7056
217-523-7066 (fax)
E-mail: info@nccre.org
Internet: www.nccre.org

Organizations

American Association of School Administrators
1801 North Moore Street
Arlington, VA 22209
703-528-0700
Internet: www.aasa.org

American Federation of Teachers
555 New Jersey Avenue NW.
Washington, DC 20001
800-238-1133
202-879-4458
Internet: www.aft.org

Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith
823 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017
212-490-2525
212-867-0779 (fax)

Center for Substance Abuse Treatment
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Center for Substance Abuse Treatment
Rockwall II, 6th Floor
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857
301-443-5052
301-443-7801 (fax)

Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence
Campus Box 439
University of Colorado at Boulder
Boulder, CO 80309-0439
303-492-1032
303-443-3297 (fax)
303-492-8465 (information)
Internet: www.colorado.edu/cspv/

Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice
1622 Folsom Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
415-621-5661
415-621-5466 (fax)
E-mail: cjcj@cjcj.org
Internet: www.cjcj.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Injury Prevention and Control
Mail Stop K60
4770 Buford Highway NE.
Atlanta, GA 30341-3724
404-639-3286 (press inquiries)
770-488-4362 (family violence and injury prevention)
Internet: www.cdc.gov/ncipc/ncipchm.htm

Center To Prevent Handgun Violence
1225 I ("Eye") Street NW., Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20005
202-289-7319
202-408-1851 (fax)
Internet: www.cphv.org

Children's Defense Fund
25 E Street NW.
Washington, DC 20001
202-628-8787
202-662-3510 (fax)
E-mail: cdfinfo@childrensdefense.org
Internet: www.childrensdefense.org

Child Welfare League of America
440 First Street NW., Suite 310
Washington, DC 20001-2085
202-638-2952
202-638-4004 (fax)
Internet: www.cwla.org

Coalition To Stop Gun Violence
1000 16th Street NW., Suite 603
Washington, DC 20036
202-530-0340
202-530-0331 (fax)
Internet: www.csgv.org

Conflict Resolution Education Network
1527 New Hampshire Avenue NW.
Washington, DC 20036
202-667-9700
202-667-8629 (fax)
Internet: www.crenet.org/

Division for Prevention and Control of Interpersonal Violence
University Health Center–9D
Wayne State University School of Medicine
4201 St. Antoine
Detroit, MI 48201
313–577–6690
313–577–0316 (fax)
Internet: www.med.wayne.edu/communitymedicine/dpciv.htm

Drugs and Crime Clearinghouse
Office of National Drug Control Policy
2277 Research Boulevard
Rockville, MD 20850
800–666–3332

Drug Strategies
1575 I ("Eye") Street NW., Suite 210
Washington, DC 20005
202–289–9070
202–414–6199 (fax)
E-mail: dspolicy@aol.com
Internet: www.drugstrategies.org

Federal Law Enforcement Training Center
120 Chapel Crossing Road
Glynco, GA 31524
912–267–2100
Internet: www.ustreas.gov/fletc

National Alliance for Safe Schools
Ice Mountain
P.O. Box 290
Slanesville, WV 25444–0290
888–510–6500
304–496–8100
304–496–8105 (fax)
E-mail: nass@erols.com
Internet: www.safeschools.org

National Association of Elementary School Principals
1615 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
703–684–3345
800–386–2377
Internet: www.naesp.org

National Association of School Psychologists
National Mental Health and Education Center for Children and Families
4340 East-West Highway, Suite 402
Bethesda, MD 20814
301–657–0270
Internet: www.naspweb.org/center/

National Association of School Resource Officers
P.O. Box 40
Boyton Beach, FL 33425–0040
888–31NASRO (888–316–2776)
561–554–4903
Internet: www.nasro.org

National Association of Secondary School Principals
1904 Association Drive
Reston, VA 20191–1537
703–860–0200
703–476–5432 (fax)
E-mail: nassp@principals.org
Internet: www.nassp.org

National Center for Conflict Resolution Education
Illinois Bar Center
424 Second Street
Springfield, IL 62701–1779
217–523–7056
217–523–7066 (fax)
E-mail: info@nccre.org
Internet: www.nccre.org

National Council on Crime and Delinquency
1970 Broadway, Suite 500
Oakland, CA 94612
510–208–0500
510–208–0511 (fax)
E-mail: rjohnson@chorus.com
Internet: www.nccd-crc.org/

National Crime Prevention Council
1000 Connecticut Avenue NW., 13th Floor
Washington, DC 20036
202–466–6272
202–296–1356 (fax)
Internet: www.ncpc.org

National Criminal Justice Reference Service
P.O. Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20850–6000
800–688–4252
410–792–4358 (fax)
Internet: www.ncjrs.org

National Dropout Prevention Center
Clemson University
209 Martin Street
Clemson, SC 29631–1555
864–656–2599
864–656–0136 (fax)
E-mail: ndpc@clemson.edu
Internet: www.dropoutprevention.org

National Education Association
1201 16th Street NW.
Washington, DC 20036
202–822–7200
202–822–7292 (fax)
Internet: www.nea.org

National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives
4609 Pinecrest Office Park Drive, Suite F
Alexandria, VA 22312–1442
703–658–1529
703–658–9479 (fax)
E-mail: noble@noblenatl.org
Internet: www.noblenatl.org

National Parent-Teacher Association
330 North Wabash Avenue, Suite 2100
Chicago, IL 60611
800–307–4782
312–670–6783 (fax)
E-mail: info@pta.org
Internet: www.pta.org

National Resource Center for Safe Schools
101 SW. Main, Suite 500
Portland, OR 97204
800–268–2275
503–275–0444 (fax)
Internet: www.safetyzone.org

National Rifle Association
Education and Training Department
11250 Waples Mill Road
Fairfax, VA 22030
703–267–1000
Internet: www.nra.org

National School Boards Association
1680 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
703–838–6722
703–683–7590 (fax)
Internet: www.nsba.org

National School Safety Center
141 Duesenberg Drive, Suite 11
Westlake Village, CA 91362
805–373–9977
805–373–9277 (fax)
E-mail: info@nssc1.org
Internet: www.nssc1.org

National Urban League, Inc.
Stop the Violence Clearinghouse
120 Wall Street
New York, NY 10005
212–558–5300
212–344–5323 (fax)
E-mail: info@nul.org
Internet: www.nul.org

National Youth Gang Center
Institute for Intergovernmental Research
P.O. Box 12729
Tallahassee, FL 32317–2729
800–446–0912
850–386–5356 (fax)
E-mail: nygc@iir.com
Internet: www.iir.com/nygc/

Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
1100 Vermont Avenue NW.
Washington, DC 20530
800–421–6770
202–514–2058
202–633–1479 (fax)
Internet: www.usdoj.gov/cops

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
810 Seventh Street NW.
Washington, DC 20531
202–307–5911
202–307–2093 (fax)
E-mail: askjj@ojp.usdoj.gov
Internet: www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org

Police Executive Research Forum
1120 Connecticut Avenue NW., Suite 930
Washington, DC 20036
202–466–7820
202–466–7826 (fax)
E-mail: perf@policeforum.org
Internet: www.policeforum.org

Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue SW.
Washington, DC 20202–6123
202–260–3954
202–260–7767 (fax)
E-mail: safeschl@ed.gov
Internet: www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS

Assessment Tools

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